

NEWS RELEASE



***OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
San Diego, California***

***United States Attorney
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For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - July 21, 2008

United States Attorney Karen P. Hewitt announced that Gloria Eugenia Leon-Aldana was sentenced today in federal court in San Diego by the Honorable M. James Lorenz to serve 48 months in custody, based on her convictions for charges relating to the smuggling of aliens and forced labor. Leon-Aldana pled guilty on January 17, 2008 to three counts of Bringing in Illegal Aliens for Financial Gain and one count of Forced Labor.

According to court records, Leon-Aldana was a member of an alien-smuggling operation that recruited aliens in Mexico, smuggled them into the United States, harbored the aliens within San Diego, California, and then compelled their labor through a series of threats. Leon-Aldana compelled the labor of one particular alien by threatening to contact United States Border Patrol to arrest the alien if he did not provide services as she instructed.

United States Attorney Hewitt stated, “We are pleased that the efforts of the Department of Homeland Security have resulted in the dismantling of a notorious alien-smuggling ring. Those who attempt to compel the labor of others shall receive a similar punishment upon apprehension and prosecution.”

Co-defendant Mario Antonio Antunez-Sotelo remains a fugitive.

DEFENDANTS

Case Number: 07CR0035-L

Gloria Eugenia Leon-Aldana

Mario Antonio Antunez-Sotelo

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

- Count 1 Title 18, United States Code, Section 371, Title 8, United States Code, Section 1324(a)(2)(B)(ii) (conspiracy to bring in illegal aliens for financial gain)
- Count 2 Title 8, United States Code, Section 1324(a)(1)(A)(iii), (v)(I), and (B)(i) (conspiracy to harbor illegal aliens for financial gain)
- Count 3 Title 18, United States Code, Sections 371, 1589, 1594 (forced labor conspiracy)
- Counts 4-9 Title 8, United States Code, Section 1324(a)(2)(B)(ii) and Title 18, United States Code, Section 2 (bringing in illegal aliens for financial gain, and aiding and abetting)
- Counts 10-15 Title 8, United States Code, Sections 1324(a)(1)(A)(iii), (v)(II), and (B)(i) (harboring illegal aliens for financial gain)
- Counts 16-19 Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1589, 1594, 2 (forced labor, attempted forced labor, and aiding and abetting)

AGENCY

Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement